

# MISSISSIPPI

## Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Surveyors



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Spring, 2019

NEWSLETTER

Thirty-First Edition

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## NTSB report on gas explosion emphasizes role of engineering licensure in public protection

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The release of the National Transportation Safety Board's report, *Natural Gas Distribution System Project Development and Review*, highlights the important protections that licensed professional engineers (P.E.s) provide the U.S. public. In this report, NTSB issued several recommendations concerning professional engineering licensure requirements. With its focus on competency and ethics, licensure is an essential safeguard for the public, and the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) supports the NTSB recommendations as necessary steps for public protection.

The safety recommendation report was issued on November 14, 2018, in response to a series of explosions and fires on September 13, 2018, in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts. These explosions and fires followed the release of high-pressure natural gas into a low-pressure gas distribution system. They resulted in damage to 131 structures, including the destruction of at least five homes. One individual was killed, and at least 28 others were injured.

Among other findings, the NTSB report concludes that the gas company would probably have identified the omission of regulator-sensing lines—thereby preventing the error that led to this accident—if the company had performed a comprehensive constructability review that required all departments to review

the project plans and had a P.E. approve, or seal, the plans. In sealing such plans, a professional engineer takes responsibility for their accuracy and completeness. The report notes that the company field engineer was not a licensed P.E. and that neither state law nor company policy required a licensed P.E. to develop or review engineering plans for public utilities.

In relation to professional engineering licensure, the NTSB report specifically recommends that Massachusetts eliminate the P.E. license exemption for public utility work and require a P.E. seal on engineering drawings for public utility projects. It further recommends that the gas company revise its engineering plan review process to ensure that a P.E. seals plans before work begins. The NTSB recommendations concerning P.E. licensure requirements are changes that would protect the public, and NCEES hopes that all the proper steps are taken to ensure that these recommendations are addressed.

Massachusetts is not alone in allowing license exemptions for certain groups of engineers. Each U.S. state and territory sets its own licensing laws, and the majority have some type of exemption, including those for engineers working in industrial, manufacturing, public utility, and transportation settings. Some federal agencies also have P.E. license exemptions for federal engineering projects. NCEES encourages other U.S. states, as well as federal agencies, to review this report and consider its recommendations for their own jurisdictions to avoid similar tragedies.

Professional licensing has one purpose: public protection. P.E.s must meet education and experience requirements and pass the required exams to establish that they can practice engineering without endangering the public. To maintain a license, a P.E. must adhere to a strict code of conduct, with the primary charge being to practice the profession in a manner that protects the health, safety, and welfare of the public. A professional engineer who violates this obligation—either through incompetence or unethical actions—is subject to losing his or her license.

While we cannot go back and prevent what has already happened, we can work to ensure that proper steps are taken to prevent similar accidents. Public utilities is one of the many areas in which professional engineers can be called on to ensure that business activities adequately protect public welfare. As an organization committed to advancing licensure for engineers and surveyors, NCEES and its member licensing boards from all U.S. states and territories continue to focus on the fundamental goal of safeguarding the public. NCEES commends NTSB for taking this position to protect the U.S. public from incompetent or unethical practices.

James J. Purcell, P.E.  
NCEES President

B. David Cox  
NCEES Chief Executive Officer

The NTSB safety recommendation report (PSR1802) can be found at the following link:

<https://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Pages/PSR1802.aspx>

## ***Congratulations to all the Examinees who passed the 2018 exams!***

### **PRINCIPLES & PRACTICE OF ENGINEERING**

Charlton Alford	Richard Coupe	Michael Kennedy	Brandon McKay	Jason Street
William Arrington	Jon Damiens	Randell Kirby	Jeffrey Melby	Robert Talley
Barry Artz	Benjamin Emery	Robert Knesal	Walton Mitts	Derek Tutor
Johnathon Atkins	Robert Gambill	Philip Labarre	Alex Overby	Robert Weaver
Colin Baird	Justin Giles	Cassidy Langston	Alexander Reeb	Nathan White
Mark Barger	Nathan Green	Kevin Lepre Jr	Amber Reeb	Heather Windham
Joel Bellipanni	Jeremy Harrison	Mark Long	Jacob Rucker	Katherine Winters
David Bond	Benjamin Hoggard	Yancey Lott	Jameson Shannon	
Daniel Brannon	Joseph Johnson	Richard Matson	Robert Smith	
Cody Burnett	Derrick Jones	William McCollum	Matthew Speed	

### **FUNDAMENTALS OF ENGINEERING**

Kyle Anderson	Zachary Dallaire	Grant Jones	Justin McMahan	Cody J Smith
James Arthur	Michael Daves	Stephen Kachelman	William Meadows	Easton Smith
Luke Baker	Craig Davis	Cullan Kight	Matthew Millette	Jeremy Smith
Peyton Barnes	Jonathan Dean	William King	Ryan Moore	Lauren Smith
James Bethay	Jennifer Deignan	Bryson Krause	Jamie Mote	Leland Smith
Brian Boska	Samuel Denley	William Krizak	Xiaojing Ni	James Steele Jr
James Bowling	Michelle Dove	Barrett Lake	Brian Oliver	Chancellor Strange
Brandon Boyd	Kang Du	Steven Leachman	Callie Olszak	Lenton Strong
Bobby Branning	Dylan Elkins	Richard Lee	Tanner Parsons	Trevor Strong
Layton Breithaupt	Ty Faulkner	Winston Lee	William Peacock	John Suedel
Jordan Brown	Hannah Faust	William Lewis	Matthew Phillips	Zane Surette
Taylor Buie	Jonathan Fili	Cheng Liao	Daniel Pierce	Joseph Szabo
Clinton Carlisle	Hunter Fowler	Diana Linder	Holly Pitts	Steven Terracina
Clayton Chapman	Gowtham Ganesan	Lucas Lizana	Chad Porter	Gregory Thomas
Willis James Chism	William Gatlin	Jared Locastro	Daniel Presley	Brian Thompson
Tyler John Ciufo	Kyle Griffin	Donald Lorbecke	Alex Price	James Tobermann
Bradley Coleman	Charles Guillotte	Ryan Lucius	Matthew Proll	Spencer Touchstone
Matthew Collums	Nicki Haines	Victoria Malley	Sara Randall	Emily Turner
Chandler Cooper	Lauren Hall	Sydney Marvin	Albert Ross	Taylor Varnado
Brittni Cooper	Dillon Hall	Joshua Matthews	William Rossell	Alexandra Warren
Caroline Cordell	Zachary Horton	Clayton Mayer	John Salmon	Sabrina Welch
Christopher Cornelius	Qisheng Hou	Casey Mayne	Ben Sellers	Thomas White
Matthew Crittle	Jacob Houston	Keegan McCormack	Shahriar Shahrokhhabadi	David Whitmon
Kyle Crotwell	William Howington	Cary McCraine	Mohit Shrivastava	Keifer Wolfe
Daniel Crowley	Mason Jarabica	Phillip McDonald	Kosish Sigdel	David Yarbrough
Joel Cummins	Michala Jerome	Austin McDowell	Hunter Simrall	Zachary Zosel
Jonathan Curtis	Yi Jiang	Tyler McIntyre	Charles Sims	
Prabodh Dahal	Joshua Johnson	Sarah McLellan	Cody A Smith	

### **FUNDAMENTALS OF SURVEYING**

Brannon Brown  
Kyle Grubb  
William Keith  
James Smith

### **PRINCIPLES & PRACTICE OF SURVEYING**

Charles Floyd  
John Fluharty  
David Merrill  
Justin Pruden

### **MS 2 hr PS Exam**

Jeffrey Cannatella  
Lawrence Ferrell  
Timothy Fish  
Charles Floyd  
Joshua Hazen  
Terry Lightsey  
Austin McCormick  
Jeremy Orrell  
Todd Osborn  
Alex Overby  
Patrick Patterson

# NCEES honors Mississippi professional engineer Dennis Truax for service

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Dennis Truax, Ph.D., P.E., of Starkville, Mississippi, has been awarded the NCEES Distinguished Service Award for his dedicated service to NCEES and the engineering and surveying professions. Truax received this award at the organization's 97th annual meeting, held August 15–18, 2018, in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Truax initially served as a member of the Mississippi Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Surveyors from 2005 to 2006 and has been serving an additional appointment since 2010. During this time, he has served as president, vice president, and secretary. Between board appointments, he was an emeritus member and continued to support the board as a consultant.

He made an especially important impact in 2005, when Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. He coordinated activities of the board and the Mississippi State University student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers to help address the needs of the state's professional engineers. In addition to serving the Mississippi board, Truax has been committed to the work of NCEES. He has been a member of the Committee on Education since 2015. He was a member of the Advisory Committee on Council Activities from 2011 to 2015, serving as chair in 2014–15.

Truax is a professor and head of the Mississippi State University Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and holds the James T. White Endowed Chair.

## **Disciplinary/Legal Actions,**

The Board office receives and processes complaints regarding engineering and surveying activities. Some investigations result in disciplinary actions while others result in administrative actions such as letters of education or closing unsubstantiated/insufficient complaints. Below is a recap of disciplinary actions that occurred from January 1, 2018 thru December 31, 2018.

Terry Wayne Boyd, working without active license, entered a consent order for unlicensed practice. Monetary Fine was levied but was not paid and re-licensure application was not received per the Board order.

Brian Barton, PS# 3160, agreed to a consent order for Standards of Practice of Surveying violation. A monetary fine was levied, required to submit the next 3 surveys to the Investigative Committee for review and approval and to successfully complete the Mississippi Standards of Practice PDH course.

Roger Watson, PS# 26363, agreed to a consent order for CPC violation. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete the deficient PDHs.

Shawn O'Steen, PS# 2851, agreed to a consent order for CPC violation. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete the deficient PDHs.

William Huffman, PS# 26987, agreed to a consent order for CPC violation. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete the deficient PDHs.

Julio Pequero Ramos, PE# 27440, agreed to a consent order for CPC violation. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete the deficient PDHs.

Christopher Johnson, PS# 3219, agreed to a consent order for CPC violation. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete the deficient PDHs.

Berry Veney, PE# 16942, agreed to a consent order for violation of use of seal. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete an Ethics PDH.

Elmore Moody, PE# 11553, agreed to a consent order for violation of use of seal. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete an Ethics PDH.

Tommy Pinkerton II, PE#9849, agreed to a consent order for CPC violation. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete the deficient PDHs.

William Stephens, PS# 3147, agreed to a consent order for Mississippi Standards of Practice violation. A monetary fine was levied and required to submit the next 3 surveys to the Investigative Committee for review and approval.

Dean Kidd, PE# 15146, agreed to a consent order for CPC violation. A monetary fine was levied and to successfully complete the deficient PDHs.